

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 OMB-01 TAR-02 AGR-20 AID-20

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 OIC-04

RSC-01 SIL-01 STR-08 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 CEA-02 PA-03

PRS-01 USIA-12 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 NEA-10 L-03 RSR-01

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ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, FAO, UNCTAD, XM, XA

SUBJ: SIXTH SESSION, SUB-GROUP ON STATISTICS, FAO INTERGOVERNMENTAL
GROUP ON BANANAS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. IN ITS TWO-DAY SESSION SUB-GROUP ON STATISTICS
DEVELOPED CUSTOMARY CURRENT YEAR AND MEDIUM TERM FORECASTS.
DISCUSSION MARKED BY REPETITION OF ECUADOREAN COMPLAINT RE
DEFINITION OF EXPORT AVAILABILITIES, WHICH GLOSSED OVER. DATE
AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING LEFT PENDING DECISION REGARDING NEXT
MEETING OF FULL GROUP. END SUMMARY.

2. IN LARGELY ROUTINE EXERCISE, SIXTH SESSION OF SUB-GROUP ON
STATISTICS PRODUCED PROVISIONAL FORECASTS OF BANANA IMPORTS AND
EXPORT AVAILABILITIES FOR 1973 AND 1976. CURRENT YEAR EXPORTS
PLACED, SUBJECT TO LATER REVISION, AT 6,771,000 M.T. WHILE IMPORTS
ESTIMATED AT 6,426,500 M.T. FOR 1976 EXPORT AVAILABILITIES
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FORECAST AT 9,057,000 M.T. WITH IMPORTS PROJECTED AT 7,010,000 M.T.

SUB-GROUP'S CONCLUSION SUGGESTS WIDENING OF GAP BETWEEN EXPORT AVAILABILITIES AND IMPORTS.

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3. DOWNWARD REVISION IN 1972 EXPORT DATA, ESPECIALLY DECLINES IN TOTALS FOR HONDURAS (820,000 M.T.) AND THE CANARY ISLANDS (333,000 M.T.) PRODUCED UNEXPECTED DIP BELOW 6.5 MILLION M.T. ALTHOUGH THIS FIGURE CLOSELY IN ACCORD WITH REVISED IMPORT DATA, IT IMPLIES FALL IN WORLD EXPORTS FROM 1971 LEVEL OF 6.53 MILLION M.T. SECRETARIAT APPEAL FOR UPWARD REVISIONS TO AVOID THIS RESULT PROVED UNAVAILING.

4. TRIGGERED BY FORECASTS OF EXPORT AVAILABILITIES MADE BY SEVERAL SMALLER PRODUCERS (MEXICO-210,000 M.T., DOMINICAN REPUBLIC-100,000 M.T., AND SOMALIA-210,000 M.T.), ECUDOREAN DELEGATION RAISED QUESTION WHETHER MEDIUM TERM FORECAST MEANT TO REFLECT EXPORT CAPABILITY OR EXPECTATIONS OF ACTUAL SALES CONSIDERING PREVAILING MARKET CONDITIONS. IF FORMER WERE CRITERION, ECUADOR INDICATED IT WOULD REQUEST UPWARD REVISION FROM ITS CLAIMED REALISTIC LEVEL OF 1.65 MILLION M.T. TO 2 MILLION M.T. REPRESENTATIVE OF FAO DIRGEN (VITON) FAILED TO MOLLIFY ECUDOREANS WITH EXPLANATION THAT MEDIUM TERM FORECASTS TRADITIONALLY INCLUDED DATA ESTIMATED BY EXPORTERS ON NUMBER OF VARYING BASES. CHAIRMAN OF SUB-GROUP (PRIESTER, JAMAICA) STRUCK COMPROMISE BY ASSURING ECUDOREANS THAT TITLE OF TALE WOULD BE FOOTNOTED TO SHOW THAT ESTIMATES WERE QUANTITIES WHICH EXPORTING COUNTRIES EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO MARKET.

5. SEVERAL DELS REMARKED ON GROWTH IN PROJECTED SURPLUS TO OVER 2 MILLION M.T. IN 1976. CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP (MULHERIN) SOUGHT TO PLACE FORECAST IN PERSPECTIVE BY POINTING TO FACTORS WHICH PREVIOUSLY PREVENTED REALIZATION OF PROJECTED EXPORT AVAILABILITIES. SECRETARIAT REPS ALSO DEFLECTED DISCUSSION BY CITING ALLEGEDLY GOOD RECORD FOR CURRENT YEAR FORECASTS. FORECASTING ERRORS SAID TO RANGE FROM 1-3 PERCENT FOR IMPORTS OVER THREE-YEAR PERIOD 1970-1972 AND IN 5-10 PERCENT RANGE FOR EXPORTS DURING SAME SPAN.

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6. DECISION RE DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING LEFT TO SECRETARIAT. U.S. DEL, NOTING PROPOSED JOINT FAO/UNCTAD CONSULTATION, SUGGESTED NEXT MEETING OF SUB-GROUP MIGHT USEFULLY BE SCHEDULED TOGETHER WITH CONSULTATION. IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS AFTER CLOSE OF SUB-GROUP SESSION US DEL EXPRESSED VIEW TO MULHERIN THAT THERE WOULD BE LITTLE UTILITY IN HOLDING JOINT FAO/UNCTAD CONSULTATION BEFORE 1973 DATA AVAILABLE. WHILE MULHERIN SEEMED TO REGARD THIS APPROACH AS REASONABLE, VITON, ON OTHER HAND, APPEARED ANXIOUS

TO DISPOSE OF JOINT CONSULTATION AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. ON ORGANIZATION OF JOINT CONSULTATIONS, HULHERIN ASSERTED THAT FAO WOULD CONTINUE TO RUN MEETING WITH UNCTAD SECRETARIAT FREE TO PREPARE ANY PAPERS IT WISHED. US DEL URGED THAT BOTH ORGANIZATIONS COORDINATE THEIR REQUESTS SO AS TO PREVENT DUPLICATION AND KEEP REQUESTS TO GOVERNMENTS AT MINIMUM. (TRADE ADVISORS HAVE SHOWN US REQUEST FROM CLAIRMONTE OF UNCTAD SECRETARIAT FOR EXTENSIVE COMPANY DATA, MOST OF WHICH THEY DISINCLINED TO PROVIDE. CLAIRMONTE'S REQUEST SUGGESTS UNCTAD WILL UNDERTAKE STUDY ON BANANAS SIMILAR TO COCOA MARKETING STUDY. SULLIVAN

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